

Amendments to the Claims

The listing of claims will replace the previous version, and the listing of claims:

Listing of Claims

1-10. (withdrawn)

11. (currently amended) An apparatus for producing ~~matured~~ compost~~[[-like]]~~ material comprising:

a vessel having ~~which is provided with~~ an inlet for organic waste and ~~with~~ an outlet for the organic waste material treated with heat as the compost material; and

a heating means for heating and drying the material within the vessel ~~and further treating the material with heat~~ at temperature of 100-200°C, the heating means having a plurality of heating panels arranged vertically, each heating panel having a hollow portion inside thereof, and heating fluid provided in the hollow portion,

rakes provided at the each heating panel for moving the material so that the material falls in a stepwise fashion from the inlet to the outlet through the heating panels,

a temperature detector provided in the vessel for detecting a temperature of the compost material, and

temperature controlling means for controlling the temperature of the compost material to be treated at 100-200°C,[[;]]wherein

the organic waste is continuously fed through the inlet and the material treated with heat is continuously discharged through said outlet, ~~and~~

~~a temperature detector is arranged in the vicinity of the outlet and a temperature controlling means is provided for controlling such that the temperature measured by the temperature detector becomes a predetermined value.~~

12. (currently amended) An apparatus for producing ~~matured~~ compost[[-like]] material as claimed in claim 11, wherein said temperature controlling means is a means for controlling ~~the~~ feeding speed of said organic waste.

13. (currently amended) An apparatus for producing ~~matured~~ compost[[-like]] material as claimed in claim 11, wherein said temperature controlling means is a means for controlling ~~the~~ moving speed of the compost material within said vessel.

14. (currently amended) An apparatus for producing ~~matured~~ compost[[-like]] material as claimed in claim 11, wherein said temperature controlling means is a means for controlling ~~the~~ heating temperature of said heating means.

15. (currently amended) An apparatus for producing ~~matured~~ compost[[-like]] material as claimed in claim 11, wherein said temperature controlling means controls such that said temperature measured by said temperature detector becomes 110-200°C.

16-32. (withdrawn)

33. (new) An apparatus for producing compost material as claimed in claim 11, further comprising a rotary shaft provided with the rakes, and a motor for rotating the rotary shaft and the rakes.

34. (new) An apparatus for producing compost material as claimed in claim 33, wherein the heating panels further comprise disk shape heating panels and ring shape heating panels arranged alternately vertically, wherein the disk shape heating panels form gaps between

the disk shape heating panels and an inner surface of the vessel, and the ring shape heating panels have center openings so that the materials alternately fall through the gaps and center openings.

35. (new) An apparatus for producing compost material as claimed in claim 34, wherein the fluid is oil, and the oil is heated by an oil heating device according to the temperature controlling means.

36. (new) An apparatus for producing compost material as claimed in claim 35, wherein said oil downwardly circulates among the heating panels through the each hollow portion.

37. (new) An apparatus for producing compost material as claimed in claim 36, wherein the temperature detector is situated in a vicinity of the outlet.